

“SACHETAN”,
L/4-5, SITARAM BUILDING,
PALTON ROAD,
BOMBAY-400 001.
E-31, CUSROW BAUG,
COLABA CAUSEWAY,
BOMBAY-400 039,
December 30, 1981.

S. R. SANE

B. F. CHHAPGAR

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25. AN INTERESTING METHOD OF FISHING IN DHANBAD DISTRICT, BIHAR

(With a text-figure)

In connection with our studies on fishes of Bihar, one of us (G.M.Y.), while making faunistic survey of River Barakar during June, 1981, came across an interesting method of fishing at Madrussa ghat (R. Barakar) c. 6 km. north of Tundi (Distt. Dhanbad). The method essentially consists of a pot-trap—an aluminium bowl, c 10 cm diameter, on top of which a piece of cloth is tied around. A few holes are made in this cloth and a small quantity of baked and coarsely ground seeds of white millet (“Jowar”, *Sorghum vulgare*), *Kundurung* (*Bibiscus sabdariffa* L.) (Malvaceae), and *Sarguja* (*Guizotea abyssynica* Cass. (Compositae) mixed in 4:1:1 proportion, respectively, are placed in the bowl. The bowl is set in a

depression in the sand in such a way that the cloth surface is almost level with sand around it (Fig. 1).

This method is operated in shallow, running waters where the bottom is generally sandy. As the bowl is left under water, all fish available in the vicinity get attracted towards the bowl owing to presence of ground seeds which act as bait, and finally enter the bowl through the holes. When a number of fish have gone in they fail to come out, presumably due to panic (Faruqui & Sahai 1943). The bowl is now taken out of water and fish removed to a fish basket. The operation is repeated as long as fish are available in sufficient number, otherwise the trap is shifted to a new spot.

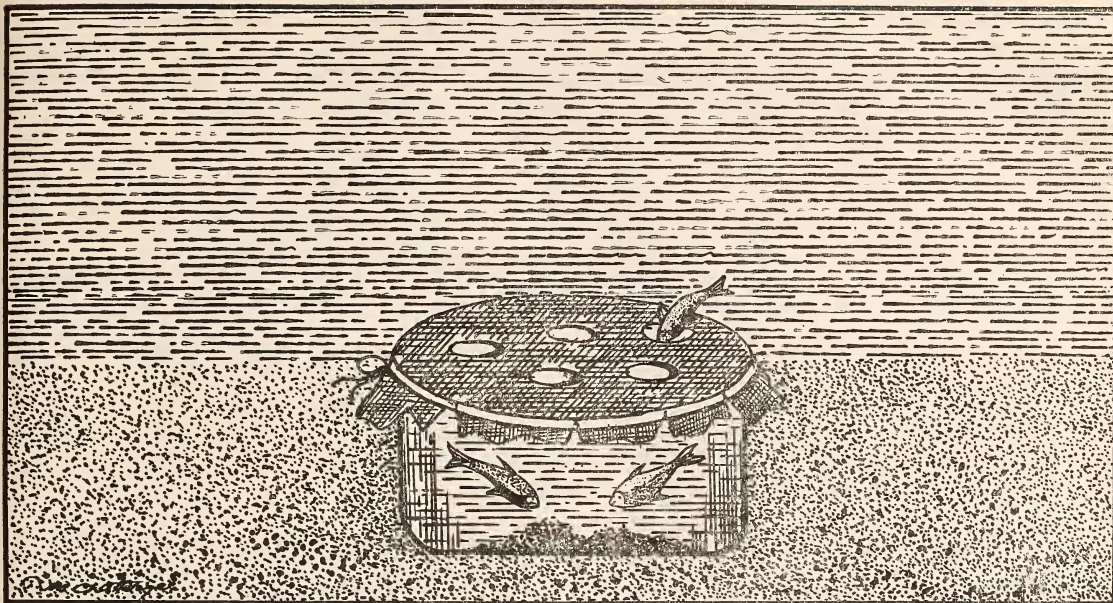


Fig. 1. The pot-trap in operation.

This method of fishing is quite efficient, for about half a dozen small cyprinids belonging to genera *Puntius*, *Salmostoma* and *Barilius* were caught in one operation. The smell from ground seeds—the bait, appears to play an effective role in attracting fishes towards the trap and for directing them into the bowl; *Sarguja* seeds are known to yield an oil used as an article of food (Haines 1922).

Of the various methods employed for catching fishes, netting and angling are the most popular. While angling is practised by using different types of bait, various modifications of netting have also come in vogue. The method

described above is a trap, resembling the pot-trap described by Faruqui & Sahai (1943) from Uttar Pradesh. However, the pot-trap from U.P. consists of a flat earthen vessel with raised walls, on top of which a piece of cloth is tied around. A few holes are made in the cloth and some flour pills are placed inside to attract fishes. We have not so far seen the earthen trap net described by Faruqui & Sahai (1943) being used in Bihar.

We are thankful to Dr. V. S. Agrawal, Botanical Survey of India, Calcutta, for the identification of seeds.

ZOOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA,
GANGETIC PLAINS REGIONAL STATION,
PATNA-16,
October 21, 1981.

G. M. YAZDANI
P. D. GUPTA

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26. FIELD OBSERVATIONS ON THE OCCURRENCE OF
MICRONECTA SCUTELLARIS STAL. (HEMIPTERA: CORIXIDAE)

(With a text-figure)

The water bug, *Micronecta scutellaris* Stal. is very common in stagnant water in ponds, pools and ditches. Abundance of this bug was observed in the three ponds of Aligarh district and was found to be influenced by the increase in percentage of organic matter in the water. Alkalinity of water beyond pH 8.5 has an adverse effect on the population density of *M. scutellaris*. The temperature within the observed range (16.5-32.3°C) did not affect the occurrence of this species.

INTRODUCTION

Micronecta scutellaris Stal. (Fam: Corixidae) is usually found in stagnant water in ponds, pools and ditches in many parts of the world almost throughout the year (Butler 1923). *M. scutellaris* and several other species of the family Corixidae are the preferred food of poultry, cage birds and fishes in many countries. In Mexico, the eggs are collected by placing reeds in the water (Aucona 1933) and are used as human food (Hungerford 1948). In view of this importance it was considered desirable to study the distribution of *M. scutellaris* under Indian climatic conditions and also the environmental factors that determine their abundance.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The abundance of *M. scutellaris* was studied over a period of twelve months from October 1971 to September 1972 in three different ponds in Aligarh. One of these Nilichhetri pond is about 30.0 metres in length and 10.0 metres

in width. The second was Jamalpur pond which is about 25 x 8 metres in area. The main source of water in these ponds is rain. The polytechnic pond, the third is small, spherical, cemented and about 5 metres in diameter and largely has tap water.

The bugs were collected from the ponds with a hand net on every Sunday. On each sampling day two collections were made, one at 8.00 hr and other at 16.00 hr. Each sample was subjected to differential numerical analysis and mean of all the counts, made for all samples collected during a month in a Centre, was taken as representing the monthly average and plotted against the respective month. The percentage of organic matter in the soil was measured by the ignition of dried samples. Temperature of the water was noted and pH was determined by means of pH paper on the spot during each collection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The various hydrological features at sampling sites during the period of study are given